

F820004-1730

No. 67

AMERICAN CONSULATE

1940 MAY 3 Antofagasta, Chile, April 17, 1940 MAY 3 PM 1 26



SUBJECT: Erben, Dr. Hermann Frederick.

1-1055

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor respectfully to refer to the Department's mimeographed instruction of February 21, 1940 (File No. 130-Erben, Hermann Frederick) entitled ACTIVITIES AND WHEREABOUTS OF DR. HERMANN FREDERICK ERBEN, to this Consulate's despatch No. 55 of February 10, 1940, reporting that Dr. Erben had been signed on the American SS NIGHTINGALE at this port in the capacity of messman, for the voyage to New York, and to report to the Department that I have now had a chance to gain from Captain Laurence B. Parker, the master of the NIGHTINGALE, information regarding Dr. Erben's activity while enroute to New York and subsequent to his arrival there.

Dr. Erben persisted in his effort to effect his discharge from the vessel at the Panama Canal and, despite his statement to me that he was without funds, offered to post a cash bond of \$150 to induce the authorities to permit his leaving the vessel. However, his

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his petition was not granted, and he continued as a member of the vessel's crew until it reached New York.

A report not to be attributed to Captain Parker, but to the purser of the NIGHTINGALE, is that when the vessel reached New York on February 20th some agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation were on hand to talk to Dr. Erben. It appears, however, that he was not held because he again appeared on the NIGHTINGALE on March 14, 1940, which was the day it sailed from New York for the west coast of South America. Captain Parker reported that Erben had taken out a seaman's service, or identification, book and that his purpose was to have made in it by the master an entry regarding his service on the NIGHTINGALE. When asked what he was doing he told Captain Parker that he had signed on a Norwegian ship in the capacity of ship's surgeon, but that it had tied up and he had not been able to sail in it. It was further reported by Captain Parker that two or three persons had told him that Dr. Erben had actually sailed out of New York in a Norwegian vessel but that his informants had no information regarding the vessel's route or destination.

I asked the American shipmaster if Dr. Erben was still dressed in his khaki uniform when he returned to the NIGHTINGALE on March 14th and the reply was negative, it being stated that he was well, but not elaborately, dressed in civilian clothing. If this is true, he apparently had more money than that which he earned on the voyage to New York.

Respectfully yours,

George H. Adams
George H. Adams
American Vice Consul

130 (Transmitted in triplicate to Department)
GHA:rb (Copies to: American Embassy, Santiago;
American Consulate, Valparaiso;
Consulate General, Buenos Aires;
American Embassy, Panama)

In reply refer to
A-B

May 13, 1940

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear General Miles:

Referring to previous correspondence regarding Dr. Hermann Frederick Erben, I am pleased to enclose a copy of STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL Despatch No. 383 of April 26, 1940 from the American Consul at Valparaiso, Chile giving additional information regarding Dr. Erben.

Copies of this despatch are also being transmitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Office of Naval Intelligence.

Sincerely yours,

Adolf A. Berle, Jr.
Assistant Secretary

Enclosure:
Copy of despatch.

Brigadier General Sherman Miles,
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2,
War Department,
Washington, D. C.

A-B:FA:202

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A true copy of
the signed origi-
nal. WEB

In reply refer to
A-B

May 13, 1940

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Mr. Hoover:

Referring to previous correspondence regarding Dr. Hermann Frederick Erben, I am pleased to enclose a copy of STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL Despatch No. 585 of April 26, 1940 from the American Consul at Valparaiso, Chile giving additional information regarding Dr. Erben.

Copies of this despatch are also being transmitted to the Military Intelligence Division of the War department and the Office of Naval Intelligence.

Sincerely yours,

Adolf A. Berle, Jr.
Assistant Secretary

Enclosure:
Copy of despatch.

The Honorable
J. Edgar Hoover,
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation,
Department of Justice,
Washington, D. C.

A-B:R:SCB

A true copy of
the signed origi-
nal. WCB

A-B

May 13, 1940

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIALMEMORANDUM FOR CAPTAIN NIXON:

In connection with previous communications regarding Dr. Hermann Frederick Erben there is enclosed a copy of STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL Despatch No. 383 dated April 26, 1940 sent the Department of State in further regard to Dr. Erben.

Copies of this despatch have also been submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department.

Enclosure:
Copy of Despatch.

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A-B:FW:WCB

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the signed original.
WCB.

A true
the signed original.